

**Annex 1**



**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for  
Safeguarding and Child Protection at  
Town Close School**

**School Name: Town Close School**

**Policy owner: M. Woods**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**Date first shared with staff: 31st March 2020**

**Reviews: November 2020/January 2021**

## **Context**

From 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021, parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and vulnerable children - who absolutely need to attend. All Primary, Secondary schools and colleges were instructed to move to online learning.

This addendum of the Town Close School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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## Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mark Woods Melanie Harries		deputy@townclose.com preprephead@townclose.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Laing		preprepdep@townclose.com
Head	Nicholas Bevington		head@townclose.com
Chair of Governors	Sarah Anthony		chairman@townclose.com
Dept. Chair of Governors	Susan Jack		deputy@townclose.com
Safeguarding Governor	Sarah Waddington		deputy@townclose.com

## Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance. **This** might include:
  - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
  - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
  - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - those living in temporary accommodation

- those who are young carers
- those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- care leavers
- others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Town Close School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: Mark Woods.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and the School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Town Close School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed.

### **Critical workers**

Parents whose work is critical to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors as outlined in the government guidance. Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school or college if required, but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.

### **Attendance monitoring**

In this lockdown, children have to receive and engage in daily education, either physically or virtually. For children who are accessing on site provision, staff will need to register the children as normal. In Pre Prep, this is morning and afternoon and in Prep, it is at the beginning of each lesson, as well as the morning and afternoon registration periods. Staff are also registering children who are accessing online

learning in the same way. The registration code for remote learners in attendance is a 'B'. If a pupil does not attend, teaching staff are contacting parents to find out the reason why. Our Data Administrator continues to **remote?** the number of pupils and staff in school to the DfE on a daily basis. **Perhaps that should be monitor?**

Town Close School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – the School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, Town Close School will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at School, or discontinues, Town Close School will notify their social worker.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Town Close School has Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mark Woods and Melanie Harries.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Sarah Laing

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to the School's safeguarding procedures and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the School.

It is important that all Town Close School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

### **Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report on the School's safeguarding concern recording form.

They should either pass the recording form in person, if in School, or via email to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads or the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the School, they should ensure to raise this concern with the Headmaster. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headmaster whilst away from School, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headmaster.

Concerns around the Headmaster should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mrs Sarah Anthony.

### **Safeguarding Training and induction**

DSL training is likely to take place online, whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping

Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Town Close School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

### **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, the School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for the setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

Where Town Close School is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The School will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

The School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct: referring a case' advice.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current global pandemic, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, we will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

### **Online safety in School**

Town Close School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system, which helps to block inappropriate material.

Where pupils are using devices in School, appropriate supervision will be in place and the School's code of conduct will be adhered to.

## **Children and online safety away from School**

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and, as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the Town Close School code of conduct.

Town Close School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- If leading 1:1 sessions, try to ensure that there is an adult in the vicinity within the child's home.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household. Pupils are asked to wear school uniform during their online school day.
- Live classes should adhere to the length of normal school lessons.
- Pupils should always have their video on when accessing online learning and live lessons.
- Pupils should work in a safe and quiet environment, and wherever possible, this should not be in a bedroom.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Town Close School to communicate with pupils.

## **Security breach**

Town Close uses educational platforms for teaching and security is monitored by the IT department. Staff are expected to be vigilant and to report any concerns to the SMT. All issues raised will be dealt with quickly, with relevant authorities and/or the platform providers being contacted. The school will report any security breach to the relevant organisations in a timely fashion, ensuring that staff, parents and pupils (where appropriate) are aware of measures that have been put in place to minimise future risk. Any such breach should be responded to as set out in the school's Crisis Management Plan. [Crisis Management plan.docx](#)

## **Supporting children not in School**

Town Close School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or



someone who would normally receive pastoral-type support in School, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan should be made as a record of contact.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, telephone contact and door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The School will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

Town Close School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

### **Supporting children in School**

Town Close School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

We will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headmaster will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

We will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

We will ensure that, where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, appropriate support is in place for them.

Where there are concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Leads or first aiders – these should immediately be brought to the attention of the Senior Management team.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Town Close School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

If the School receives a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The School will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded with a concern form and appropriate referrals

made.